

Message Text

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ACTION AF-08

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FM AMEMBASSY LAGOS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6106

C O N F I D E N T I A L LAGOS 8722

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, PINT, ENRG, PINR, NI

SUBJECT: SOVIET PARTICIPATION IN NIGERIAN PETROLEUM TRAINING
INSTITUTE

REF: LAGOS 5611

1. IN RESPONSE TO GAO INQUIRY ON BACKGROUND, STRUCTURE AND
OPERATIONS OF NIGERIAN PETROLEUM TRAINING INSTITUTE, SUMMARY OF
PERTINENT DATA FOLLOWS. INQUIRY WAS MADE BY GAO TEAM WHICH VISITED
LAGOS IN JUNE 1976.

2. OFFICIAL FMG PRESS RELEASE JULY 3, 1971 STATED THAT INSTITUTION
WAS TO BE ESTABLISHED AT WARRI AT COST OF 900,000 NIGERIAN POUNDS
(2.80 POUNDS THEN EQUALLED US\$1). USSR WOULD PROVIDE 255,000
NIGERIAN POUNDS LINE OF CREDIT AND TRAINING STAFF PAID OUT OF
THIS CREDIT.

3. AGREEMENT SIGNED BETWEEN FMG AND USSR APRIL 20, 1972 PROVIDING
FOR SOVIET TEACHERS AND EQUIPMENT. TECHNOEXPORT OF USSR NAMED TO
SUPPLY EQUIPMENT. ON MAY 3, 1974, TWO ITALIAN CONSTRUCTION FIRMS
WERE AWARDED CONSTRUCTION CONTRACT WITH COMPLETION DATE SET FOR
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DECEMBER 1976.

4. SCHOOL OPENED IN JUNE 1975 IN TEMPORARY QUARTERS OF FORMER SHELL TRAINING BUILDING IN UGBELLI NEAR WARRI WITH 88 STUDENTS IN FIRST CLASS. TRAINING HAS CONTINUED IN SAME OLD BUILDING AND ENROLLMENT HAS REMAINED BELOW 100. PLANS CALL FOR 250 STUDENTS WHEN NEW BUILDING IS COMPLETED. COMPLETION DATE NOW ESTIMATED FOR EARLY 1977.

5. TWO-YEAR TRAINING PROGRAM OFFERS SIX COURSES: DRILLING RIG MAINTENANCE MECHANIC; DRILLING RIG MAINTENANCE ELECTRICIAN; INSTRUMENT ELECTRICIAN; FITTER; LABORATORY TECHNICIAN; REFINERY OPERATOR. STAFF REPORTEDLY NOW HAS 22 SOVIET INSTRUCTORS, PLUS ROUGHLY EQUAL NUMBER OF SOVIET WOMEN INTERPRETERS, PLUS ABOUT 30 NIGERIAN INSTRUCTORS. AS VIRTUALLY NONE OF SOVIET TEACHERS SPEAK ENGLISH, THEY TEACH THROUGH INTERPRETERS. INSTRUCTION MANUALS, EQUIPMENT GUIDES, VISUAL AID DEVICES ARE ALL IN RUSSIAN WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES WHERE POSSIBLE.

6. RUSSIAN LANGUAGE DIFFICULTIES PLUS STUDENT DISSATISFACTION OVER BLUE COLLAR ORIENTATION OF TRAINING RESULTED IN STUDENT RIOTS IN MAY (REFTEL. SINCE THAT TIME FMG OFFICIALS ADMIT THAT THE PROGRAM IS UNWORKABLE. PERMANENT SECRETARY AWONIYI OF MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM RESOURCES HAS TOLD SOVIET AMBASSADOR THAT PROGRAM HAS NOT WORKED OUT WELL AND THAT RUSSIANS' OWN IMAGE IS BEING DAMAGED

.
ACCORDING TO OUR CONTACTS IN GOVERNMENT AND IN PETROLEUM INDUSTRY IT IS QUITE POSSIBLE THAT SOVIETS WILL BE PHASED OUT AND THEIR TEACHING/CONSULTATION CONTRACT NOT RENEWED.
CAHILL

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